

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2022 Regular Session
May 3, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Lance Harris, chairman of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Lance Harris, chairman
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative Kendricks "Ken" Brass
Representative Aimee Adatto Freeman
Representative Julie Emerson
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg
Representative Stephanie Hilferty
Representative Patrick O. Jefferson, vice chairman
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Tammy T. Phelps
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elizabeth L. Borne, legislative analyst
Lisa Lovello, legislative analyst
Jacqueline Snowden, committee administrative assistant
Alexandra Cravins, committee assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms
Kalan Jenkins, clerk
Hailey Austin, clerk

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

Representative Harris offered a motion to adopt a three-minute rule for presenters, witnesses, and members to speak. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freeman, Freiberg, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

House Bill No. 688 by Representative Phelps

Representative Phelps presented House Bill No. 688, which provides relative to sabbatical leave for teachers.

Larry Carter, Louisiana Federation of Teachers and School Employees, 9623 Brookline Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 270-5436, spoke in support of House Bill No. 688.

Michael Faulk, Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, 2713 Indian Mound Boulevard, Monroe, LA 71201, (225) 229-6021, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 688.

Ethan Melancon, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 688.

Representative Phelps offered a motion to report House Bill No. 688 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 688 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Freeman, Emerson, Freiberg, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 33 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 222 by Representative Marcelle

Representative Marcelle presented House Bill No. 222, which provides relative to out-of-school suspensions and expulsions of public school students.

Alma Stewart Allen, Louisiana Center for Health Equity, P.O. Box 82637, Baton Rouge, LA 70884, (225) 772-7029, spoke in support of House Bill No. 222.

Sarah Vandergriff, Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools, 320 Metairie-Hammond Highway, Metairie, LA 70005, (504) 430-6749, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 222.

Jennifer Carignan, Louisiana Save Our Schools, 719 South Taylor Street, Covington, LA 70433, (240) 893-9501, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 222.

Representative Jefferson offered a motion to report House Bill No. 222 favorably, to which Representative Amedée objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 222 was reported favorably by a vote of 5 yeas, 4 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Brass, Freiberg, Jefferson, Phelps, and St. Blanc voted yea. Representatives Amedée, Emerson, Charles Owen, and Tarver voted nay. Representative Harris abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support, 8 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 17 in opposition. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 861 by Representative St. Blanc

Representative St. Blanc presented House Bill No. 861, which provides relative to inspections of family child care providers and in-home providers.

Representative St. Blanc offered amendments to House Bill No. 861 in the form of a substitute bill. Representative St. Blanc offered a motion to adopt the substitute bill. Without objection, the substitute bill was adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Chief Butch Browning, 8181 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA, (225) 806-0803, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 861.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 861 by substitute, to which Representative Phelps objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 861

was reported by substitute by a vote of 9 yeas and 1 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Jefferson, Charles Owen, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea. Representative Phelps voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 185 by Representative Charles Owen

Representative Charles Owen presented House Bill No. 185, which provides relative to expressive activities at public postsecondary education institutions.

Tyler Coward, Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, 510 Walnut Street, Suite 1250, Philadelphia, PA 19106, (215) 717-3473, spoke in support of House Bill No. 185 and provided a handout, "Protecting Free Speech at Louisiana Institutions of Higher Education", Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Amanda Eberts, 216 Avante Garde Circle, no city or state given, (504) 252-5551, spoke in support of House Bill No. 185.

Melissa Flournoy, Louisiana Progress Action, 2228 Cherokee Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 936- 7200, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 185.

Dr. Jim Henderson, University of Louisiana System president, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 7-300, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (318) 426-7104, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 185.

Representative Charles Owen offered a motion to report House Bill No. 185 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 185 was reported favorably by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support, 9 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 6 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 970 by Representative White

Representative White presented House Bill No. 970, which creates an early childhood literacy program for the purpose of delivering an age-appropriate book monthly to eligible children under the age of five.

DeJunné Clark Jackson, Center for Literacy and Learning, 530 Lakeland Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, (888) 792-1874, spoke in support of House Bill No. 970 and provided two handouts, "Supportive Research: Exploring How the Imagination Library Impacts Communities", Exhibit B; and "Dolly Parton's Imagination Library: How it Works in the United States", Exhibit C, which are included in the committee records.

Representative Amedée offered a motion to report House Bill No. 970 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 970 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Freeman, Emerson, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Charles Owen, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 7 in support, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 946 by Representative Dustin Miller

Representative Dustin Miller presented House Bill No. 946, which provides relative to the membership and reports of special education advisory councils.

Representative Harris offered amendments that:

1. Changed proposed law regarding the minimum number of council members from 13 to nine and limited the applicability of this provision to schools or school systems with more than 1,000 students.
2. Authorized the inclusion of one high school student with an exceptionality and one person who represents and entity that serves students with disabilities or their families in the parents groups of council members.

Representative Harris offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Freeman, Emerson, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Charles Owen, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Bambi Polotola, Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA, (337) 945-0979, spoke in support of House Bill No. 946.

Sarah Vandergriff, Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools, 320 Metairie-Hammond Highway, Metairie, LA 70005, (504) 430-6749, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 946.

Dannie Garrett, Louisiana State Bar Association, 635 Main Street, #3, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, (225) 382-0333, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 946.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 946 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 946 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Brass, Freeman, Freiberg, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 8 in support, and 1 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 8 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 981 by Representative Duplessis

Vice Chairman Jefferson in the chair.

Representative Duplessis presented House Bill No. 981, which requires instruction on mental health to be provided for students in grades kindergarten through 12.

Ethan Melancon, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 981.

Jenna Chiasson, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 981.

Representative Brass offered a motion to report House Bill No. 981 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 981 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Brass, Freeman, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 17 in support, 1 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Chairman Harris in the chair.

House Bill No. 391 by Representative Bryant

Representative Bryant presented House Bill No. 391, which provides relative to tuition for certain nonresident postsecondary students.

Dr. Jim Henderson, University of Louisiana System president, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 7-300, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (318) 426-7104, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 391.

Representative Harris offered amendments to limit the applicability of proposed law by excluding private institutions and institutions under the Louisiana State University board of supervisors. Representative Harris offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Freeman, Emerson, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Representative Jefferson offered a motion to report House Bill No. 391 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 391 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

House Bill No. 837 by Representative Horton

Representative Horton presented House Bill No. 837, which provides relative to discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity in public schools.

Representative Harris offered amendments to add a definition of "classroom discussion" to mean discussion held during class from the time class begins until the time class ends. Representative Harris offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Freeman, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Representative Amedée offered amendments that carved out an exception for the topics of sexual orientation and gender identity in classroom discussion and instruction in certain grades in instances where those topics are provided for in-state content standards.

Representative Amedée offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments, to which Representative Jefferson objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the amendments were adopted by a vote of 8 yeas and 4 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Emerson, Freiberg, Hilferty, Charles Owen, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea. Representatives Brass, Freeman, Jefferson, and Phelps voted nay.

Representative Jefferson offered amendments that removed the prohibition on teachers and others from discussing their sexual orientation or gender identity with students in K-12.

Representative Jefferson offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments, to which Representative Tarver objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 5 yeas and 7 nays. Representatives Brass, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, and Phelps voted yea. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Freeman, Emerson, Charles Owen, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted nay.

Dr. Randy Harper, Bellaire Church, 4330 Panther Drive, no city or state given, (318) 347-1434, spoke in support of House Bill No. 837.

John Harmon, Convention of States Action, 426 Sena Drive, Metairie, LA 70005, (504) 579-4052, spoke in support of House Bill No. 837.

Jennifer Carignan, Louisiana Save Our Schools, 719 South Taylor Street, Covington, LA 70433 (240) 893-9501, spoke in support of House Bill No. 837.

Dr. Will Hall, Louisiana Baptist Office of Public Policy, 1250 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71309, (318) 449-4398, spoke in support of House Bill No. 837.

Katie Alexander, 1380 Steele Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 408-9498, spoke in support of House Bill No. 837.

Dr. Mike Holloway, Ouachita Baptist Church, 435 Crowell Road, Eros, LA 71238, (318) 278-2712, spoke in support of House Bill No. 837.

Merrilee Montgomery, Louisiana Progress Action, 650 North Sixth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (229) 936-7200, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Dr. Belinda Davis, Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, 4540 Hyacinth Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 202-2698, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Melissa Flournoy, Louisiana Progress Action, 2228 Cherokee Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 936- 7200, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Nadia Eskildsen, Women with a Vision, 2028 Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard, (504) 444-4180, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Brenna Wells, LSU School of Social Work and LGBTQ+ Studies, no address given, (318) 532-1845, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Natalie Elethorp, Louisiana Trans Advocates, 119 Sandy Ridge Road, Eros, LA 71238, (318) 450-9854, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Dr. Jasper Privat, American Psychological Association, 2527 Aubry Street, New Orleans, LA 70119, (337) 349-0640, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Sarah Jane Guidry, Forum for Equality, 4915 South Claiborne, New Orleans, LA, (504) 301-6006, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Peyton Rose Michelle, Louisiana Trans Advocates, 1099 Ruth Drive, St. Martinville, LA 70582, (377) 356-9312, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

N. Dietz, 1553 North Dargenois Street, New Orleans, LA 70119, (510) 684-2187, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Serena Borne, Real Name Campaign, 8439 Sycamore Street, no city or state given, (508) 908-9650, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Quest Riggs, Real Name Campaign, 2730 Dauphine Street, New Orleans, LA 70117, (985) 590-8201, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Josie Beekman, 3135 Highland Road, Apartment 420, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (806) 367-1152, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Alexis Canfield, 2901 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (914) 255-6927, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

SK Groll, 340 Steele Boulevard, #A, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (724) 771-3642, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Gabe Flores, 3350 Wyoming Street, Apartment 105, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (713) 703-0310, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Mikiyah Parker, 6901 East Caprice Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70811, (225) 939-7677, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Logan Wolf, 6444 Jones Creek Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70381, (985) 519-1236, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Jane Mitchell, 950 Camelia Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 361-3458, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Tucker Rose Barker, Crescent Care, 1631 Elysian Fields Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70117, (504) 607-2723, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Colleen Kissel, 1024 Monterrey Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70815, (501) 766-3265, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Sara Jenkins, 5700 Saint Anthony, #121, New Orleans, LA, (591) 324-2739, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Kaitlyn Joshua, 12296 Oak Colony Drive, Geismar, LA 70734, (225) 454-8321, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 837.

Representative Brass offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 837, to which Representative Amedée objected. No vote was taken.

Representative Amedée offered a substitute motion to report House Bill No. 837 with amendments, to which Representative Phelps objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 4 yeas, 7 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Amedée, Emerson, Charles Owen, and Tarver voted yea. Representatives Brass, Freeman, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Phelps, and St. Blanc voted nay. Representative Harris abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 16 in support, 31 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 15 in support, and 133 in opposition. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Harris announced that House Bill No. 536 by Representative Cox, which lowers the minimum ACT score required for initial qualification for a TOPS-Tech Award from 17 to 15, had been voluntarily deferred by the author.

Chairman Harris announced that House Bill No. 819 by Representative Cox, which provides relative to extended sick leave for school bus operators and public school employees, had been voluntarily deferred by the author.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Brass offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Freeman, Emerson, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Lance Harris
House Committee on Education

Date adopted: